

Attorney Docket No.: KUZ-0018
Inventors: Yasukochi et al.
Serial No.: Not yet assigned
Filing Date: Herewith
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REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in the instant application.
Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).
Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Rejection of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Forsberg (U.S. Patent No. 3,879,325) in view of Kitazawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,164,492). The Examiner suggests that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to replace the aminoplast composition including urea-formaldehyde compound used by Forsberg as a crosslinking agent with boron trifluoride as taught by Kitazawa, in Forsberg's process which is suggested by the Examiner to use a similar polymer, based on their recognized interchangeability as functionally equivalent agents.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's characterization of the teachings of Kitazawa et al. Contrary to the Examiner's suggestion, Kitazawa et al. do not teach "interchangeability of urea formaldehyde compound and boron trifluoride as functionally equivalent

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crosslinking agents for crosslinking hydroxyl function groups." Instead, the section of Kitazawa et al. cited by the Examiner, namely col. 10, lines 47-62 of Kitazawa et al., teaches boron trifluoride to be a curing catalyst for epoxy-type cross-linking agents. At col. 10, lines 47-48, Kitazawa et al. state that "[t]he hydroxyl groups can also be crosslinked with a crosslinking agent in the presence of a catalyst." Further, at col. 10, lines 60-64, Kitazawa et al. state that "[i]n using an epoxy-type cross-linking agent, common curing catalysts for epoxy resins can be used which include, for example, boron trifluoride, tin tetrachloride, lithium hydroxide, tri-n-butylamine, triethylamine, etc." Accordingly, all teachings of Kitazawa et al. relating to boron trifluoride require addition of both boron trifluoride and a crosslinking agent. Thus, contrary to the Examiner's suggestion, Kitazawa et al. provide neither a motivation to try, nor a reasonable expectation of success, that a boron containing compound can be used as a crosslinking agent instead of the urea formaldehyde crosslinking agent taught by Forsberg et al.

Further, as taught at page 5, lines 1-4, of the instant specification, the present invention is aimed at making the process of crosslinking milder and facilitating the shaping of a pressure-sensitive adhesive product. In contrast, the

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boron trifluoride curing catalyst disclosed by Kitazawa is used to accelerate the crosslinking reaction of the polymer upon addition of a different crosslinking agent. See col. 10, lines 60-64 of Kitazawa. Such teachings clearly provide no motivation to try to use boron containing agents in methods of the present invention aimed at milder crosslinking conditions.

MPEP § 2143 states that to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the reference or combine the reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art references when combined must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The cited combination of references, which does not teach or suggest use of a boron containing compound or a metal alcoholate compound as a crosslinking agent in method for producing pressure-sensitive adhesive shaped products, clearly does not meet these criteria.

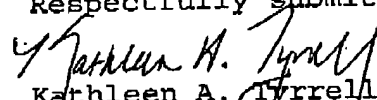
Withdrawal of this rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is therefore respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

Applicants believe that the foregoing comprises a full and complete response to the Office Action of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and subsequent allowance of the pending claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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